

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Water, Water Everywhere: Test Your Flood IQ

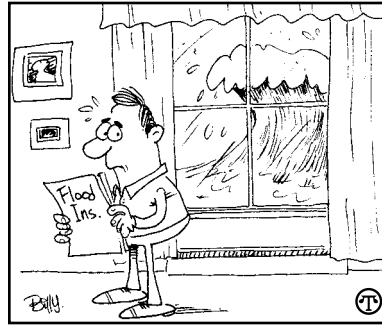
(NAPS)—Flooding is the most common and widespread natural disaster. It can occur just about anywhere, anytime. And yet, most Americans are still unprotected against flood loss. Whereas no one can prevent flooding, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), a part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), wants to lower your risks by raising your Flood IQ.

What is the National Flood Insurance Program? A federal program enabling property owners to purchase insurance protection against losses from flooding. This insurance is designed to provide an alternative to disaster assistance to meet the escalating costs of repairing damage to buildings and their contents caused by floods.

What is a flood? The Standard Flood Insurance Policy defines a flood, in part, as a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas. Flooding is caused by overflow of inland or tidal waters or by the unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source.

What does insurance cost and what does it cover? The average premium for an NFIP flood insurance policy is less than \$350 per year for more than \$120,000 worth of coverage. However, for homes in lower risk areas, a flood insurance policy is available for significantly less.

National Flood Insurance is available for homes, condominiums, apartments and commercial structures, as well as for their contents. It is sold through thousands of insurance agents throughout the country. While flood insurance does not cover basement improvements or personal belongings kept in a basement, it does cover structural



Be prepared for a flood.

elements, essential equipment and other basic items normally located in a basement.

How much coverage can you purchase? Homeowners can get up to \$250,000 of structural coverage and businesses up to \$500,000. There is separate contents coverage, up to \$100,000 for residential and \$500,000 for non-residential dwellings, so renters can get flood insurance, too.

How do I file a claim? Contact your insurance agent. Claims are paid even if a disaster is not declared by the President. You can even request a partial payment immediately.

What's the difference between disaster assistance and flood insurance? Typically, federal disaster assistance is a loan that must be paid back with interest. Flood insurance pays for all covered losses and does *not* have to be repaid. Flood insurance claims are paid from policyholder premiums, not taxpayer dollars. The annual cost for flood insurance is about the same as the monthly payment on a disaster home loan.

For more information about the NFIP, ask your insurance agent, visit the Web site at www.floodalert.fema.gov or call the NFIP toll-free at 1-888-CALL-FLOOD, ext. 445.